

## **Access Statement:**

### **53 Gordon Square (used by the Doctoral School).**

#### **SOAS, University of London, WC1H 0XG**

53 Gordon Square has listed building status, it was built during the Georgian era and therefore was not designed to modern standards. SOAS has worked with the Local Authority to maximise the wheelchair access, but both the listed building status and the original design of the building impose some limits which cannot be overcome (e.g. it is not possible to enlarge the lift enough to accommodate a wheelchair). So wheelchair access is limited to the ground floor only where there is a meeting room, space for individual and group study for wheelchair users and an accessible toilet.

Note: The Doctoral School does not occupy a single location, there are facilities open to doctoral students in a number of parts of SOAS. These include the Research students area (R301) in the Russell Square main building complex and 53 Gordon Square.

### **Entrance**

The building has 4 steps to the front entrance, there is no hand rail or ramp. To the right of the steps there is a wheelchair accessible alternative entrance with a call button; the receptionist will open the door on receipt of the call. This entrance has a large, heavy door and this must be opened by the Reception / Security staff. To access the building either press the call button or call 0207 898 4915, which is the Brunei Gallery, and ask to be put through to Gordon Square reception to arrange for the security officer in the building to open the door.

Once inside the door, there is a platform lift to access the ground floor (which is down one step). The carpeted floor is raked slightly towards the door into the part of the building used by the Doctoral School.

### **Vertical Access**

Vertical access within the building is by lift or stairs. The lift carriage is very small and not accessible for a wheelchair user. The lift accesses the basement, ground, first, second and third floor. The lift is not of emergency evacuation standard. The carpeted stairs have hand rails on either side until the flight up to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor where there is a handrail on one side only.

### **Emergency Refuge**

There are no emergency refuges in this building.

### **Induction Loops**

There are portable loop systems at the reception points throughout the school and others which can be borrowed from Student Services for lectures/seminars in other rooms.

## **Toilets**

There are men's and women's toilet facilities on the mezzanine floor between levels 2 and 3, the ground floor and the basement. These are quite small and unsuitable for a wheelchair user.

There is a **wheelchair accessible toilet** on the ground floor which is accessed through the gallery space (nearest the accessible entrance to the building). The door is heavy and opens outwards. Toilets for ambulant disabled people are off the kitchen in the level 3 study space.

## **Access to rooms**

The building is open 8.00 - 24.00 hours Monday to Sunday. There is a meeting room, work space and a small social area on the ground floor which are accessible to wheelchair users. The rooms above and below ground floor level are not accessible to wheelchair users (as the lift cannot be made large enough). These rooms are accessed by a push door that opens from the staircase then a door which is unlocked by security pass.

## **Appendix**

### **The Emergency Evacuation Plan**

to be agreed